Income from sale of forest products

†*373. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH: SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be please to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ample possibilities exist to earn financial benefits and additional income from the production and sale of non-wood and other forest products;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard;

(c) whether Government have undertaken the Joint Forest Management Programme; and

(d) if so, at which places this programme has been undertaken, so far?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The National Forest Policy, 1988 provides the basic principles for management of forests. According to the policy, the principal aim of the forest management is to ensure environmental stability and maintenance of ecological balance. The derivation of direct economic benefit is subordinate to the principal aim. The protection, improvement and enhancement of production of Minor Forest Produce with due regard to generation of employment and income has been identified as one of the essentials of forest management. The policy also stresses for sufficient provision of fodder, fuel and pasture, specifically in areas adjoining forest, in order to prevent depletion of forest beyond the sustainable limit. The Policy envisages for intensive afforestation programme with special emphasis on augmenting fuel wood production to meet requirement of the rural people.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests is implementing various centrally sponsored afforestation schemes in conformity with above principals. For sustainbale development and conservation of forest, a long term perspective plan "National Forestry Action Programme' has been prepared.

(c) and (d) It has been decided to involve village communities and Non-governmental Organisations in the regeneration, management and protection of forests through Joint Forest Management. Twenty-two states have so far adopted and programme and at present about 10.248 million hectares of forests are managed through 36,130 Joint Forests Management Committees in various States.

Ganga Action Plan

*374. SHRI ABANI ROY:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have wasted crores of rupees to save the river Ganges from pollution, as reported in Pioneer dated 22nd July, 2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Ganga Action Plan has totally failed to save the river Ganges;

(d) whether the World Water Commission has described the river as dirtiest river in the world; and

(e) if so, the reaction of Government thereon and what remedial steps Government are contemplating to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Goverment of India has spent Rs. 451.70 crores on pollution abatement works under Ganga Action Plan Phase I which has been declared closed since 31.3.2000. With the completion of these works, it has been possible to minimise the organic pollution reaching the Ganga river wherever the works have been made operational. However, there has been only an incidental reduction in die level of microbial pollution in the treated sewage reaching the river. This is due to the fact mat technologies for reducing microbial pollution are either cost intensive or need large areas of land. Moreover, under Ganga Action Plan Phase I, only about 35 per cent of die pollution load presently being generated from all die towns along me river has been tackled. The remaining pollution load is to be tackled under Ganga Action Plan Phase II which is under implementation. The Ganga Action Plan Phase II covers pollution abatement works on Ganga and its major tributories viz. Yamuna, Gomati and Damodar. As a result die impact of the first phase works of the Ganga Action Plan on river water quality is not adequately visible.

(d) and (e) Government is not aware of die proceedings of die World Water Commission. However, Ganga is a polluted river as only about 35 percent of its pollution has been tackled under the Ganga Action Plan Phase I. The following remedial steps have been taken by die Government under the Ganga Action Plan Phase II.

(i) State Governments have been asked to take advance action for land acquisition wherever applicable after which only die related schemes be approved. Release of Central grants and its utilisation by die State Governments is monitored more vigorously to minimise instances of diversion of funds.

(ii) Release of Central grants under die second phase of Ganga Action Plan to Bihar was widheld for some time till a firm commitment from die State Government was available for providing adequate

funds for operation and maintenance of the assets. The matter is also being pursued with the State Government of UP for adequate provision of funds for operation and maintenance of assets. Operation and maintenance of assets in West Bengal is generally satisfactory.

(iii) The State Governments have been asked to ensure continuous supply of electricity for assets through dedicated feeders wherever required.

(iv) To address the problem of microbial pollution, it has been decided to adopt land based technologies for sewage treatment wherever feasible or to use conventional technologies of sewage disinfection.

Bulk Purchase of Books for Writers

*375. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any scheme to assist the writers through bulk purchase of books;

(b) if so, what was the allocation made during the last three financial years;

(c) what is the proportion of funds allotted for Southern languages; and

(d) whether there is any other scheme through which the writers are encouraged by bulk purchase?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) Yes, Sir. There is a scheme of Financial Assistance for Publication and Purchase of Books in Indian Languages and in English.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. *(See* below)

(c) Allocations under the scheme are not made language-wise.

(d) No, Sir.

Statement

Under the scheme of financial assistance for Publication & Purchase of Books in Indian Languages and in English, the allocations made during the last three years were as follows:—

	(Rs. in Lakhs)
1997-98	62.93
1998-99	60.06
1999-2000	76.49